

WENHAM BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Meeting of Tuesday, March 4, 2014
Town Hall, 138 Main Street

Pursuant to the Open Meeting Law, M.G.L. Chapter 30 A, §§ 18-25, written notice posted by the Town Clerk delivered to all Board members, a meeting of the Board of Selectmen was held on March 4, 2014 at 7 PM in the Selectmen Chambers.

WELCOME & OVERVIEW OF AGENDA

With a quorum present, Chairman Whittaker called the Board of Selectmen meeting to order at 7 PM
Selectmen Present: Ken Whittaker, Chair; Patrick Wilson, Vice Chair; Jack Wilhelm, Clerk
Also Present: Mark Andrews, Town Administrator; Catherine Tinsley, Minutes Secretary
This meeting was recorded, with permission, by HWCAM.

Abbreviations used
BOS Board of Selectmen

Public Information
Agenda

Final Report of Regional Infrastructure Department Implementation Plan/ Community Innovation Challenge Grant

ANNOUNCEMENTS

An alternate member is needed for the Zoning Board of Appeals. Anyone interested in this position should call the Town Administrator's office.

NEW BUSINESS

Public Hearing Continued: The Removal of 12 White Pines in Main Street for Veteran's War Memorial
The hearing was continued from February 18, 2014 meeting. No additional comments were received during this time. Landscape Architect, Kim Ahern was present to talk about the Town's Master Plan for the center of town completed in 2010.

The plan includes the removal of the white pine trees on the corner of Main and Arbor Street and for three maples trees be planted in the same location. A barrier of evergreen trees will be planted along the abutter's side of the Car Barn Lot.

Ms. Ahern spoke about the characteristics of the White Pines saying they grow fast but are weak and "wooded" making them more susceptible and more likely to fall and damage the monument. Therefore, the recommendation is to remove them before the monument is in place.

Ms. Ahern referenced the University of Connecticut's report on White Pines and the affects of wind, salt, air pollution, ice, and snow that further weakens the trees.

Chairman Whittaker opened the hearing for public comment.

Tom Starr, Pleasant Street, spoke during the last meeting and reiterated his point of view that the pine trees should remain as long as they are healthy and elaborated on his opinion.

Project bids for the monument will be open on Thursday. Chairman Whittaker proposed the hearing be closed and voted at the next BOS meeting and it was the consensus to do so.

War Memorial Committee co Chair, Bruce Blanchard, noted that the offer to have the trees removed at no cost to the town is a small window of time and is weather permitting.

Vote: Mr. Wilson moved, and it was seconded to close the hearing. The motion carried unanimously.

Final Report of Regional Infrastructure Department Implementation Plan/ Community Innovation Challenge Grant
Monica Lamboy, Senior Associate and from the Edward Collins, Jr. Center for Public Management at UMass Boston and colleague Rob Haley were present to discuss the Report. A PowerPoint presentation was referenced.

APPROVED 6.3.2014

The Center was created in 2008 by act of State Legislature to assist towns in Massachusetts with technical assistance for needs communities may have such as organizational studies performance management, executive recruitment, and management training.

The project in HW is to work with School District to develop a potential action plan for regional infrastructure department that would combine the services of all three.

The action plan includes much detail. There are five implementation Plan Components to set the foundation for future discussions:

1. Descriptive profile – factual information i.e. resources, responsibilities, etc.
2. Legal Framework – overview of contracts, agreements, etc.
3. Review of Bargaining Agreements - already in place with modest differences identified
4. Organizational Assessment
5. Action Plan
 - Facilitates Maintenance is severely understaffed; the recommendation is to hire four employees at a cost of \$240,000
 - Preventive Maintenance Plan (PMP) returns \$2 in savings for every \$1 invested; currently there is no PMP
 - Fleet Maintenance & Repair; Parks Cemeteries, and Street is adequately staffed
 - Consolidated Yards, Fueling Stations, Procurement, new single fueling station, consolidating work, and equipment
 - The Water Departments – No change is recommended
 - Recommendation is to combine DPW departments with consolidated leadership under one Director, Administrator, and Assistant
 - Chapter 90 funding would be applied annually
 - A phased approach provides less cost savings

Chairman Whittaker commented that this was a “successful report” and although not a definitive plan, there are solid recommendations and it opens the door for many discussions.

Donation of Scoreboard at Cheeseman Field

Selectman Wilhelm introduced Phil Moynihan, Director of the Minor League Division of the HWLL (Hamilton Wenham Little League)

The new scoreboard is part of the plan to improve the playing experience at Cheeseman Field. This is the “diamond” field for HWLL. Currently there is a small manual scoreboard at Cheeseman Field. The existing wooden scoreboard would be replaced with a Dakronics BA 2518. A photo of the proposed scoreboard was provided. The installation would be done by volunteers. The goal is to have the scoreboard up and running for opening day in April.

Vote: Mr. Wilson moved, and it was seconded, to accept the offered donation of the new scoreboard for Cheeseman Filed with enthusiasm. The motion carried unanimously.

2015 Budget Update

David Genereux, Finance Director was present. He summarized all budgets have been voted on with the exception of the Joint Recreation, the Regional Votech, and the Town Clerk.

Mr. Wilhelm commented that with the Town Clerk leaving, there is no additional funding in the Town Clerk’s budget for additional support and it is unrealistic to expect that outside support will not be needed.

Mr. Andrews responded that the transition plan includes a reserve fund transfer for FY14 to bring on additional services is to bring on clerk service. Next year, the expense budget will carry this forward.

Mr. Wilhelm said he heard that the Hamilton Finance Committee unanimously voted a different recommendation to their BOS for the Hamilton Wenham Regional School District (HWRSD) budget that is lower than the number Wenham voted to approve. He noted his concern of the confusion on Town Meeting floor if the towns have different recommendations at their Town Meetings.

Chairman Whittaker noted that Wenham believed the budget from the HWRSD is reasonable and to wait until Hamilton takes action. Mr. Wilhelm suggested a joint meeting be scheduled as soon as possible if Hamilton BOS votes a different budget.

APPROVED 6.3.2014

Regarding the administration fee for the Joint Recreation Department, a side letter is being drafted to be the same as the library administration fee.

Town Clerk Transition Plan

Ms. Reid has taken another Town Clerk position and her last day is March 14, 2014. Ms. Reid has withdrawn her name from the election. Chairman Whittaker noted that no other candidate took out nomination papers and the Town is at risk that a write in person with minimum experience would be in the position for three years. Town Counsel has made the following recommendations:

1. Seek a strong candidate as a write in
2. Place an Article on the Warrant to make the Town Clerk an appointed position

Ms. Reid spoke saying she had little experience when she won the election as Town Clerk. She supported a Wenham resident remain in the position and that a retired town clerk be hired to mentor and assist the individual with elections. Ms. Reid was asked if the majority of the Town Clerks are appointed or elected. She said most Town Clerks positions are appointed, but note her support this position remain elected in Wenham. She questioned if the change of the position to appointed would be effective immediately or at the next ATM.

Mr. Wilhelm requested the email received from Town Counsel advising the Board. He reiterated that the FY 15 Budget does not reflect the increase for assistance.

Mr. Andrews will circulate the resume of the retired Town Clerk that has agreed to staff the office.

This will be discussed at the joint meeting with the Finance Committee Friday and action was deferred to the next BOS meeting.

Ms. Reid was recognized for her dedication service to the Town.

State of the Town

Mr. Andrews reviewed a list of accomplishments over the past year.

Some items noted:

- The Town received a Triple A Bond Rating
- FY13 Audit received the highest rating: Unqualified Opinion
- Town's Web site updated
- Set tax rate Free Cash Certified earlier than previous years
- Finance Office Staffed
- Joined Essex Regional Dispatch Center
- Fire Study Completed
- Labor contracts settled through 2016
- Worked Closely with HWRSD regarding Capital Programs, Grants, MSBA

When questioned what did not go as well as he had planned and what would improve, Mr. Andrews responded that communication and making information available to the public quicker can be improved.

Town Administrator's Evaluation

Chairman Whittaker said he had extensive comments and he would review these with Mr. Andrews and get comments. This information would be posted on the Town's web site.

Chairman Whittaker reviewed and summarized comments and goals made during the last evaluation; improvements have been realized. One area to keep improving is to give the BOS written recommendations with background on subjects being discussed / considered by the Board. The Town Administrator is responsible for building relationships in Town Hall and encouraging a positive moral and Chairman Whittaker said he feels Town Hall is more positive. Implementing a routine for employee annual evaluations was recommended to be followed.

Areas noted for improvement were to focus on responding to questions in a timely manner, transparency with Hamilton and the schools, and the five-year capital plan. Mr. Andrews was advised to delegate more.

Mr. Andrews was recognized for his work to resolve union and department head contracts smoothly and collaboratively, and his grant writing.

APPROVED 6.3.2014

The Selectmen will review each other's comments. The Town Administrator's contract will be considered for review. A decision will be made by the first of April 2014.

REPORTS

Town Administrator

- The job posting for a Finance Director has been published; resumes are due in by March 19, 2014
- The posting for contracted Financial Services was posted; proposals are due back by April 14, 2014
- The Annual Report is at printer
- The ATM Warrant is under review and will be sent to the printers by the end of next week; the BOS will take positions on the articles at their next meeting.

Selectman Wilhelm will send Mr. Andrews some additional common web sites for posting municipal jobs. He noted the Board has not seen the draft warrant and asked that it be circulated to the Board.

MINUTES - February 12, 2014 & February 18, 2014

Vote: Mr. Wilhelm moved, and it was seconded, to approve the February 18, 2014 minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

The February 12, 2014 minutes were held. No action was taken.

Vote: Mr. Wilson moved to adjourn at 9:39 PM and it was unanimous to so.

Respectfully submitted by

Catherine Tinsley